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Smith River...
annual report

**SMITH RIVER 1992
ANNUAL REPORT**

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SMITH RIVER 1992 ANNUAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

The Smith River Annual Report has been prepared by the Department since 1980. These reports provide a yearly statistical and observational record of recreational use and management activity on the Smith. This report was prepared by the river manager with assistance from other Department staff, both seasonal and permanent and covers the time period of September 1991 through October 1992.

The 1992 season demonstrated that snowpack, as much as regulation, is a controlling factor on use of the river. River flows were a third of 1991's with only 26 days with over 100 cubic feet per second flows at the Camp Baker Bridge, the minimum flow recommended for floating by the Department. Cold, wet weather in late June raised the river from 64 cfs to 264 cfs in two days and did allow for some use. Probably more importantly, this infusion of water seems to have kept water temperatures low enough to maintain fish populations. Groups that did make the trip commented on the lack of crowding, grassy, empty campsites and abundant wildlife. Hopefully, Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission action taken this fall will provide for such quality experiences, even with normal river flows.

I would like to dedicate this years's report to the Smith River Adhoc Committee, a group of private recreationists, landowners, outfitters and agency representatives that have been meeting for over eight years to advise the Department on it's management actions on the Smith. These folks have given un-selfishly and at their own expense to the river resource. Other members of the river community are fortunate to have such articulate and impassioned representatives speaking on their behalf. Diane McDermand, Craig Madsen, Gary Anderson, Mike Bay, Bill McFadden, Emil Nygard, Bruce Newell, Howard Strause, Jim Armstrong, Jeff Tiberi, Dave Todd and past members Debbie Louttit-McKay and Jim Kent - thank you for your insight and dedication - this one's for you!


Doug Habermann, January 1993

Acknowledgements

The two river rangers, Jim Bennett and Peter Keller pulled comments off the floater logs and helped gather and compile statistical data. Dave Todd and Jeff Tiberi provided guidance, review and support. Finally, thanks to Mike Aderhold, Region Four Supervisor, for your personal and professional encouragement and support.

2. Annual Rule

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission adopted the final Smith River 1992 Allocation Rules on January 15th and March 13th, 1992. The January 15th rule amended rules passed on November 8,



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1991 and December 13, 1992. The rules established regulations for private and outfitted group pre-registration, assignment of outfitter campsites and outfitter permit transferring and administration. These rules limited the number of outfitters to 20 with a moratorium on new outfitters and allocated launches among the outfitters. A copy of the complete rules are included as Appendix A.

Fees, boat identification, group size and registration rules remained the same under the 1992/93/94 Biennial State Park System User Fee Rule, also included in Appendix A.

3. Season Activities

A. Administration

Administration of the Smith River is similar to that of other units of the State Park System and includes a varied mix of activities including public meetings, personnel actions, preparation of reports and memos, purchasing of supplies and equipment, researching management issues and information gathering, maintenance, on-site actions and telephone and written communications with recreationists, landowners and other agencies.

Activities during the fall and winter seasons included preparation and taking public comments on the 1992 Annual Rule. This process included 4 commission meetings, one public hearing, several mailings of over 800 pieces each and many hours of regional and Helena office staff time.

Environmental assessments were prepared for capital improvements at Camp Baker and Eden Bridge. These improvements, consisting primarily of providing utilities to both sites, required substantial planning and coordination with the Design and Construction Bureau of the Field Services Division of the Department. Regional Parks Maintenance Supervisor Ed Nevala, Royal Rice and Steve Joppa of the D & C Bureau and Richard Newton, Lewis and Clark National Forest Archeologist were instrumental in seeing these improvements completed. Mr. Rick Higgins and the shop class from CM Russell High School constructed a sturdy and attractive maintenance shed for Camp Baker. Maintenance workers Ray Swartz, Loren Fladland, Kent Droz and river ranger Jim Bennett provided the manpower to complete the projects.

Nine meetings were held with the Smith River Adhoc Committee (SRAC). The SRAC was formed in 1984 and is an advisory group representing the three major affected publics on the Smith, landowners, floaters and outfitters and the two involved agencies, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the Lewis and Clark National Forest, Kings Hill Ranger District. The group provides a filter for management proposals and a link, both directly and as representatives, from FWP to the river community.

Department representatives also attended five meetings of the Smith River Coordinated Resource Management Commission (SRCRMC), a group of landowners, individuals, organizations and agency representatives based in the White Sulphur Springs area and concerned with management of the river. This group addresses a wide variety of issues with water quality and elk management as the primary issues during this year.

Numerous landowner contacts were made throughout the reporting period. Two notable results of this important communication were renewal of boat camp leases including a new site at Given's Gulch and the placement and signing of eight floater's gates. A new method of determining the value of boat camp leases based on the number of groups using each boatcamp was implemented.

Jim Bennett returned as a river ranger and he was joined by Peter Keller. Two rangers allowed for fulltime coverage at Camp Baker providing improved floater contact while continuing to provide regular patrol floats. The low water made it difficult to schedule patrols and ranger activities and both rangers left approximately one month early due to lack of floaters.

A cost-share agreement was made with the Lewis and Clark National Forest for funding for maintenance of Forest Service lands in the corridor and safety needs. This agreement provided \$10,000 of which \$5,937.95 was expended for wages, equipment, travel and supplies and \$2056.96 for administration by both agencies.

Budget expenditures from September, 1991 through August, 1992 were:

- Salaries - \$30,363.10
- Wages - \$9,043.49
- Benefits - \$8,608.00
- Supplies & Materials - \$8,152.08
- Communications - \$2,531.86
- Travel - \$10,426.79
- Rent - \$315.50
- Utilities - \$457.82
- Repair & Maintenance - \$4,911.91
- Other - \$103.89

for a total of \$74,914.44 in operations expenses.

\$4284.00 in fishing license dollars were used to lease eight boatcamps and the Eden Bridge takeout area.

\$29,000 in general fund dollars were expended on capital improvements at Camp Baker and \$7,294.00 was expended from the same source at Eden Bridge.

\$14,158.50 in floater's fees were collected. The Biennial Fee Rule requires that outfitters be refunded the amount paid by each to the United State Forest Service. This amounted to \$3,542.91 and should

be considered a reduction in the amount of fees collected for the 1991 season.

B. Registration

The Department provides a voluntary pre-registration system out of the Great Falls office. This system has been in place since 1986 and is intended to allow floaters to plan their trip and to avoid crowded days if possible. Pre-registration was taken by phone, with floaters providing launch date, number of floaters and craft, and the length of trip. Because of extreme low water, this system was ineffective at predicting use on any given day. Use of the system was discontinued in mid-May and it's effectiveness for 1992 is impossible to evaluate.

The Commission required mandatory pre-registration for outfitted trips. Department personnel met with Smith River Outfitters in March, 1992 to set procedures to do so. All launch requests received on or before March 2nd were assigned on that date with any conflicts resolved by a drawing. All requests received after that date were handled on a first come-first served basis through a pre-registration form. Boatcamp requests were assigned in the same manner.

Floaters are required to register their trips during the entire year.

Self-registration was available at Camp Baker when rangers were not present. 97 self registration packets were put in the registration box. 67 of these were used by float groups, 21 were unaccounted for, and 9 were not used.

Groups launching from a mid-canyon location are also required to register and pay fees. This type of use was administered by telephone, walk-in or mail from the Great Falls headquarters. 14 mid-stream launch and/or takeout floats registered in this manner. 4 groups were landowners along the river, 1 group was private floaters launching with landowner permission and 9 groups were outfitted trips.

A registration form/permit was completed by all float groups. A copy of the permit is shown as appendix B. Boat tags must be displayed by float groups in order to improve craft identification. Parties registered by the rangers had one tag for each boat and self-registered parties had one tag per group. The tags were attached to the rear of the craft and an example is shown as appendix C.

C. Floater's Log

Each group was given a floaters log (Appendix D) to fill out during their trip and deposit at the Eden Bridge take-out. The floaters

log asked specifically for comments on fishing success, put-in and take-out facilities, on-river signs and "other comments". The logs provide feedback on the condition of the river. They allow the Department to better understand use on the river and to measure the amount of use each boatcamp receives.

Floaters were asked to rank the condition of the specific boatcamps they stayed in and their fishing and floating experience. 80 out of the 181 groups that floated during 1992 returned floater's logs and the following rating was given.

Table One. Rating of Overall Floating Experience
(Percent)
(Percentages do not add up to 100% because of "no answers")

	Good	Fair	Poor
Put in	56	20	1
Takeout	55	20	0
Boat camps (in total)	91	7	2
Signs	60	14	4
Number of rainbow caught	41	14	11
Size of rainbow	18	34	15
Number of browns caught	45	19	4
Size of browns	40	19	5

80% of float groups filling out floater logs responded that the registration and floaters log were not an inconvenience.

The comments have been compiled, categorized into common themes and are presented in their entirety as Appendix E. The following number of comments were received, by topic;

- Put-in Facilities - 14
- Take-out Facilities - 13
- On-river Signs - 18
- Reports of violations and hazards - 7
- River Ranger/staff - 1
- Outfitters - 7
- Boat Camps - General - 3
- Fishing - 4
- Fees - 1
- Use levels - 4
- Other comments - 12

There were also comments specific to each boatcamp, included in this report as Appendix F. All comments received are analyzed in order to respond to floater's short-term and long-term management needs.

D. Campsite Declaration

Floaters in 1991 could voluntarily declare where they plan on camping on the declaration board located at the put-in at Camp Baker. This board lists all campsites with calendar dates across the top, allowing floaters to see where others plan to camp and to write in their own plans.

The 1992 Smith River Annual Rule required outfitters to be assigned campsites by the River Ranger. This would allow private groups to avoid outfitter campsites if desired. FWP staff with input from the Smith River Adhoc Committee selected 13 individual outfitter campsites and installed outfitter camp posts at those sites on the 1992 spring work float. Outfitters were limited to these thirteen sites and were given the opportunity to indicate their preference when they pre-registered. Private floaters were asked to refrain from using these sites until after 3:00 pm. The river ranger made the final determination of where outfitters would camp on the launch date. A hand-out on campsite courtesy was developed and given to all floater groups.

Floaters from seven private groups very strongly voiced their dismay over the outfitter designated campsites, primarily commenting that they believed outfitters got the best sites.

Out of the 80 groups that filled out floater logs, 39% used the declaration map, 54% camped where they declared, and 75% found it helpful. Low use levels may have decreased the number of groups using the declaration board.

E. Administrative Floats

Eight floats were taken during the 1992 season for the purposes of managing the Smith River. Six of these were ranger patrols, one was for reconnaissance and planning purposes, and one was part of an archeological inventory of rock art in the Smith River Canyon. Department personal and volunteers spent a total of 60 man days on the Smith River during 1992. This included staff of Montana River Outfitters providing ranger services on a late season float.

71 floater and 29 landowner contacts were made during the ranger patrols. Each boatcamp was checked for litter and resource damage on every patrol. Fire rings were cleaned and extra firerings were reclaimed. The most common type of litter continues to be metal and glass thrown into fire rings and half-burned.

8 floatgates were maintained and/or constructed with an early and greater need for livestock control due to the low water. Private property was checked for floater use and signs posted and/or replaced where trespass was or has been observed. Numerous fishing licenses were checked and follow-up requested from the enforcement division in one case.

Twelve new campsite signs were installed, three worn out signs were replaced, and numerous signs were relocated from trees onto posts. Ten latrines required relocating, a new boatcamp was established at Given's Gulch and three additional latrines were installed at high use boatcamps. Latrine screening was installed at several campsites in order to provide greater privacy at multiple campsite boatcamps. Continued effort was spent on establishing discrete campsites at large boatcamps in order to reduce conflicts between floatgroups.

F. Boat Camp Use

Twenty-three boatcamps containing approximately 52 campsites were available for floaters to utilize along the Smith River in 1992. Six of these are owned by the Department, eight are leased by the Department from private landowners and nine are National Forest lands.

Table Two was derived from ratings given by the 80 groups completing a floaters log. The numbers compiled from the card were adjusted to reflect an estimate of total use. "User nights" refers to the number of floaters that camped in each site while "group nights" refers to how many groups camped in each site. The rankings are presented as a percentage of responses under "good", "fair" and "poor" on the floaters logs.

TABLE TWO : 1992 SMITH RIVER BOATCAMP RANKING AND ESTIMATED USE

BOATCAMP	USER NIGHTS	GROUP NIGHTS	RANKING GOOD	(%) FAIR	POOR
SPRING CREEK	45	15	100	0	0
IN LIEU	35	7	33	67	0
INDIAN SPRINGS	187	37	94	6	0
MOUTH OF ROCK CREEK	130	31	92	8	0
SCOTTY ALLEN	232	48	86	5	9
DRY CANYON	72	15	67	33	0
TWO CREEK	65	15	88	12	0
SHEEP WAGON	167	44	95	5	0
COW COULEE	82	15	100	0	0
SUNSET CLIFF	130	33	93	7	0
COUNTY LINE	35	13	50	33	17
BEAR GULCH	180	26	82	18	0
TROUT CREEK	132	31	100	0	0
TABLE ROCK	122	24	100	0	0
FRAUNHOFER	52	18	100	0	0
UPPER PARKER	62	15	100	0	0
PARKER FLAT	145	33	85	8	7
STAIGMILLER	0	0	0	0	0
MERGANSER BEND	22	9	50	50	0
BLACK BUTTE	82	24	0	0	0
RIDGETOP	315	57	100	0	0
GIVEN'S GULCH	50	11	100	0	0
RATTLESNAKE BEND	192	48	100	0	0
OTHER	35	7	100	0	0

G. Camp Baker

Funding allows the Department to meet a staffing priority of fulltime coverage at Camp Baker during the float season. This is the most effective method of contacting floaters. On-river patrols move at about the same speed of other floaters and so have limited success at contacting a large number of floaters. Two rangers allowed for river patrols while still covering Camp Baker.

A capital project of installing utilities for the ranger cabin was completed in the early summer. This included power installation by the Montana Power Company, electrical wiring and fixture installation by a private contractor and a water system and finishing work provided by the regional maintenance crew and the river staff.

A river flow gauge was installed downstream of the launch area in cooperation with Ron Shields of the United States Geologic Survey Helena office. The pre-existing gauge at the Camp Baker bridge doesn't include the flows of Sheep Creek, which enters just upstream of the launch area. This total flow information will help river users to know what sort of water conditions to expect on the river. Although it may take several seasons to understand what the new flow measurement means in terms of float speed and experience, this gauge will eliminate the guesswork of estimating the widely varying flow of Sheep Creek.

H. Eden Bridge

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission leased a small area of additional land for the Eden Bridge Fishing Access Site and Smith River takeout for a four year period. This action ensures legal use of the entire landing area.

Power and telephone service was installed at Eden Bridge to provide a security light for the parking area and utilities for the site host. This was paid for through capital funds dedicated to establishing host sites in Montana State Parks.

Volunteers, many from the Great Falls Good Sam Club provided security and help to floaters by serving as on-site hosts at Eden Bridge. This host program eliminates vandalism at Eden Bridge and provides highly valued assistance to floaters coming off the river.

Garbage dumpsters were provided during the heavy use period under contract.

I. Weed Control

Weed control at Eden Bridge is provided by the landowner as part of the lease agreement. Mechanical weed control of thistle was done at Camp Baker. Monitoring of biological control of leafy spurge

through flea beetles releases was done as part of a cooperative effort with the Smith River Coordinated Resource Management Commission and Meagher County. DFWP and the SRCRMC are also cooperating on placing weed information at Camp Baker to encourage floaters to identify and report weeds. This effort will also place sign boards at Newlan Creek and Sutherin Reservoirs.

J. Volunteer Activity

15 citizen volunteers contributed 1872 hours to the Smith River program during the 1991 season through the coordination effort of Lucille Lundin, Region Four Volunteer Coordinator. This included host services at Eden Bridge and Camp Baker, shuttle drivers, preparation of mailings, manning the front desk at the regional headquarters, assisting on ranger patrols, and assisting in maintenance at Camp Baker and elsewhere in the river corridor.

Volunteers add immeasurably to the Smith program. Vandalism is stopped at Eden Bridge when a host is present and floaters are given a highly valued assist in easing their return to the "civilized" world. Volunteers multiply the maintenance impact on the river and allow citizens a first hand view of the Department's activities. The interaction between volunteers and Department staff helps us to gain insight on public opinion and to improve the program in small and large ways.

K. Fee Waivers

The 1992-94 fee rule allows for waivers of fees and group size limits for groups floating for bona fide "educational or scientific purposes". This follows the State Parks Fee Rule which also allows such waivers. The groups must make application for the waiver and provide documentation of their educational status and the educational purposes of their trip.

Three groups received waivers during the 1992 season. They were;

- Winnifred High School Science Class, 28 people, May 2nd - 5th
- White Sulphur Springs 7th Graders, 32 people, May 12th from Smith River Fishing Access Site to Elk Canyon Ranch, cooperative project with the Smith River Coordinated Resource Commission with assistance from Paul Roos Outfitters
- Eagle Mount, 6 people, September 1st, dayfloat from Two Creek to Castle Bar properties

5. Fisheries

Trout population information was gathered on three sections of the Smith River during September 1992. Although complete results from this sampling were not available at the time of this report writing, it appears that survival of both brown and rainbow trout was good.

During the 1992 float season, anglers rated the numerical catch of rainbow trout equally among the choices of good, fair, and poor.

	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of rainbow caught	41%	14%	11%
Size of rainbow	18%	34%	15%
Number of browns caught	45%	19%	4%
Size of browns	40%	19%	5%

6. Statistics

A. 1992

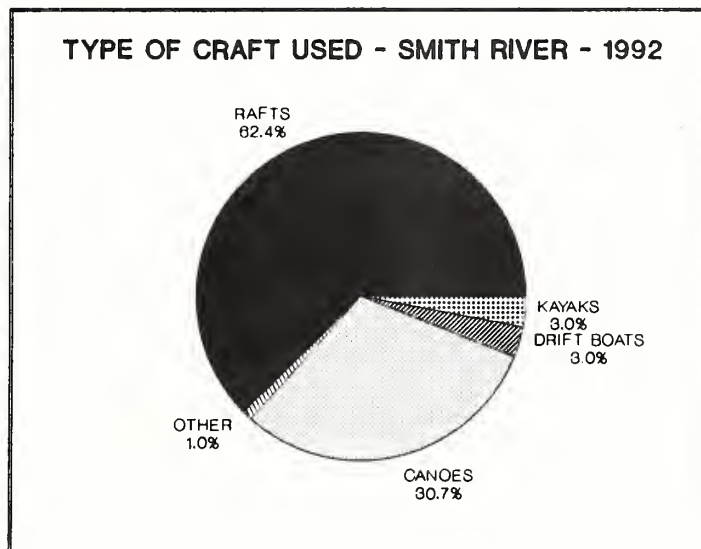
Statistics for the 1992 float season were derived from floater permits and floater logs. A day by day record of the float season is provided in the Smith River Log, included in this report as Appendix G. Table Four displays 1992 statistics by month and by private/outfitted/administrative floaters.

SMITH RIVER USE STATISTICS 1992

MONTH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	YEAR TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
# OF FLOATERS -PRIVATE	72	238	123	79	6	18	3	539	69%
-GUIDED	0	28	100	88	0	6	0	222	28%
-ADMIN	11	5	4	0	0	1	0	21	3%
-TOTAL	83	271	227	167	6	25	3	782	100%
# OF GROUPS -PRIVATE	24	44	38	28	2	5	1	142	78%
-GUIDED	0	5	13	11	0	2	0	31	17%
-ADMIN	1	3	3	0	0	1	0	8	4%
-TOTAL	25	52	54	39	2	8	1	181	100%
USER DAYS -PRIVATE	256	768	526	329	12	57	15	1963	63%
-GUIDED	0	84	534	446	0	34	0	1098	35%
-ADMIN	44	24	7	0	0	4	0	79	3%
-TOTAL	300	876	1067	775	12	95	15	3140	100%
USER NIGHTS -PRIVATE	220	630	435	276	6	43	12	1622	63%
-GUIDED	0	66	415	346	0	28	0	855	33%
-ADMIN	33	22	37	0	0	3	0	95	4%
-TOTAL	253	718	887	622	6	74	12	2572	100%
GROUP NIGHTS -PRIVATE	75	135	131	96	2	12	5	456	79%
-GUIDED	0	11	56	12	0	9	0	88	15%
-ADMIN	3	11	15	0	0	3	0	32	6%
-TOTAL	78	157	202	108	2	24	5	576	100%
AVE. DAYS/GROUP -PRIVATE	3.6	3.2	4.3	4.2	2.0	3.2	5.0	3.6	
-GUIDED	ERR	3.0	5.3	5.1	ERR	5.7	ERR	4.9	
-TOTAL	3.6	3.2	4.7	4.6	2.0	3.8	5.0	4.0	
FLOATERS/GROUP -PRIVATE	3.0	5.4	3.2	2.8	3.0	3.6	3.0	3.8	
-GUIDED	ERR	5.6	7.7	8.0	ERR	3.0	ERR	7.2	
-TOTAL	3.3	5.2	4.2	4.3	3.0	3.1	3.0	4.3	
# OF EACH CRAFT -RAFT	27	64	71	55	2	7	0	226	63%
-CANOE	11	51	23	18	1	3	3	110	31%
-DRIFT BOAT	2	2	4	1	0	0	0	9	3%
-KAYAK	2	2	5	0	0	1	0	10	3%
-OTHER	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4	1%
-TOTAL	42	119	103	76	3	13	3	359	100%
# CRAFT -PRIVATE	38	103	64	38	3	10	3	259	72%
-GUIDED	0	13	45	38	0	3	0	99	28%
-TOTAL	38	116	109	76	3	13	3	358	100%
AVERAGE -PRIVATE	1.6	2.3	1.7	1.4	1.5	2.0	3.0	1.8	
# CRAFT/GROUP -GUIDED	ERR	2.6	3.5	3.5	ERR	1.5	ERR	3.2	
-TOTAL	1.5	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.6	3.0	2.0	

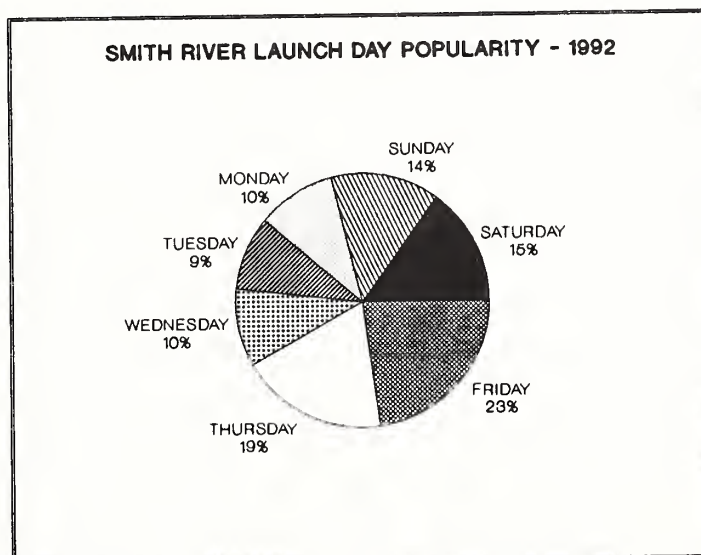
Percentage of floaters launching by day of week was:

- Sunday 14%
- Monday 10%
- Tuesday 9%
- Wednesday 10%
- Thursday 19%
- Friday 23%
- Saturday 15%



Type of craft used was:

- Raft 63%
- Canoes 31%
- Drift Boats 3%
- Kayaks 3%
- Other 1%



9 different outfitters took a total of 117 clients on 31 trips with 105 employees. Outfitted groups accounted for 17% of the groups and 28% of total floaters.

SMITH RIVER OUTFITTER LOG - 1992

* indicates mid-stream launch

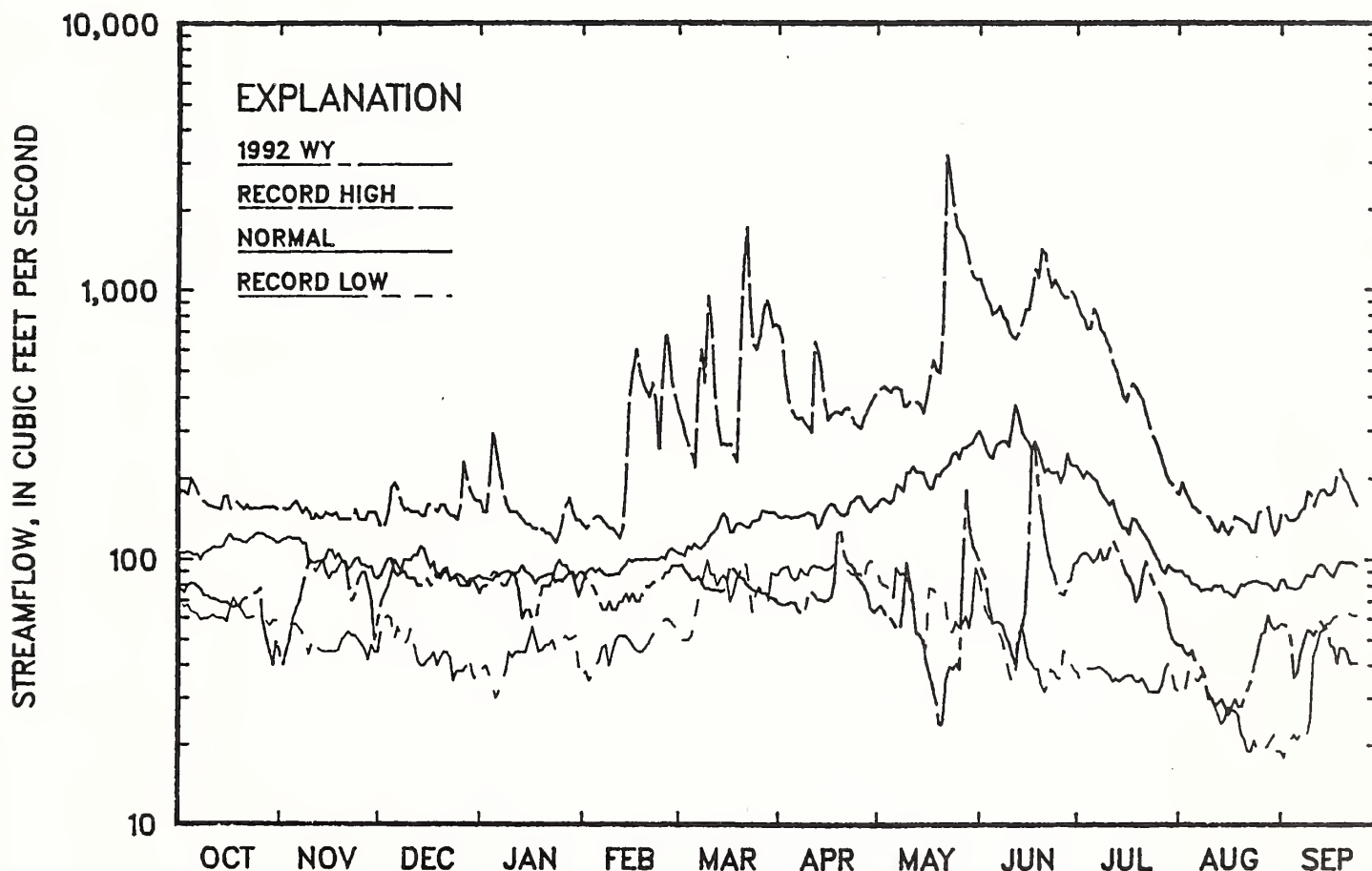
DATE	OUTFITTER	# CLIENTS	# STAFF	# DAYS	USER DAYS	USER NIGHTS	CLIENT DAYS
YEAR TO DATE TOTALS		117	105	158	1119	897	589
May 18	Montana River Outfitters *	2	2	4	16	12	8
May 21	John Maki Outfitting *	2	2	5	20	16	10
May 28	High Plains Outfitters *	5	5	4	40	30	20
May 31	Montana High Country Tours	4	4	5	40	32	20
June 8	Montana River Outfitters *	4	5	6	54	45	24
June 14	High Plains Outfitters	6	5	4	44	33	24
June 15	Montana River Outfitters *	4	4	6	48	40	24
June 16	Western Rivers	1	1	5	10	8	5
June 16	Headwaters Angling	4	4	4	32	24	16
June 17	Headwaters Angling	6	5	6	66	55	36
June 18	Montana River Outfitters	2	2	5	20	16	10
June 20	Big Sky Expeditions	4	4	6	48	40	24
June 21	Graham Deacon Outfitter	8	7	6	90	75	48
June 21	Montana River Outfitters	4	3	6	42	35	24
June 24	Big Sky Expeditions	2	2	5	20	16	10
June 28	Montana River Outfitters *	2	2	5	20	16	10
June 29	Montana River Outfitters *	6	2	6	48	40	36
July 1	Headwaters Angling	2	3	5	25	20	10
July 2	Big Sky Expeditions	6	5	5	55	44	30
July 3	Streamside Anglers	4	3	4	28	21	16
July 4	Montana River Outfitters	3	3	6	36	30	18
July 5	John Maki Outfitting	2	4	6	36	30	12
July 5	High Plains Outfitters	5	5	5	50	40	25
July 7	Montana River Outfitters	2	2	3	12	8	6
July 8	Streamside Anglers	6	4	4	40	30	24
July 15	Montana River Outfitters	2	2	6	24	20	12
July 16	Streamside Anglers	4	3	4	28	21	16
July 22	Montana River Outfitters *	10	8	4	72	54	40
Sept 5	Montana River Outfitters	2	2	6	24	20	12
Sept 13	High Plains Outfitters*	1	1	5	10	8	5
Sept 23	Western Rivers	2	1	7	21	18	14

B.Trend Data

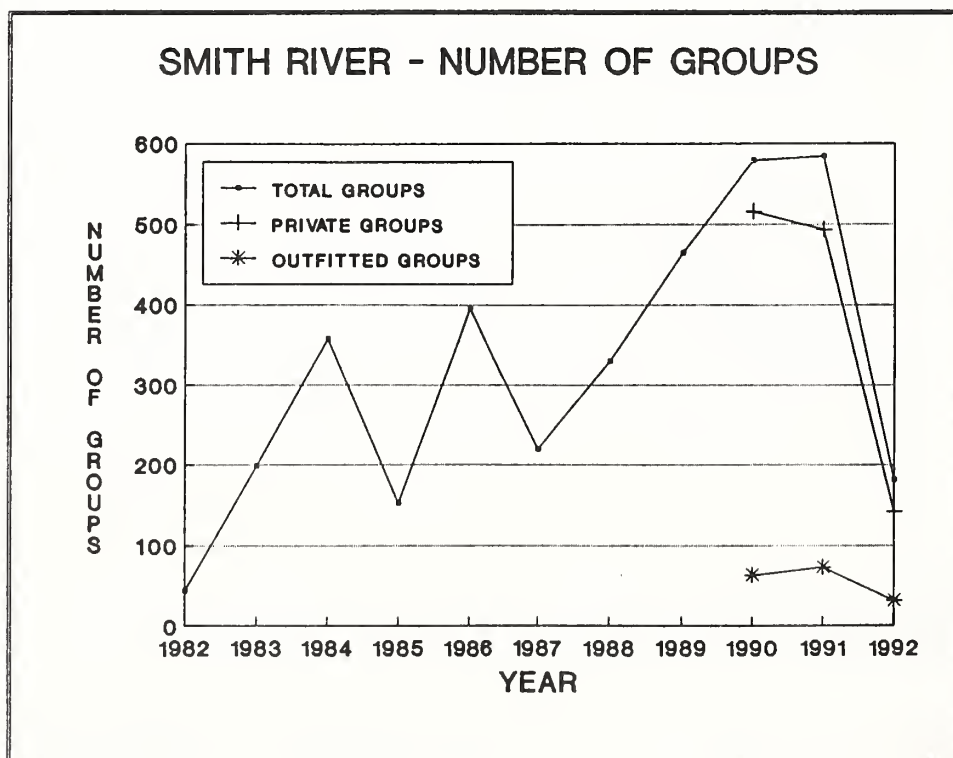
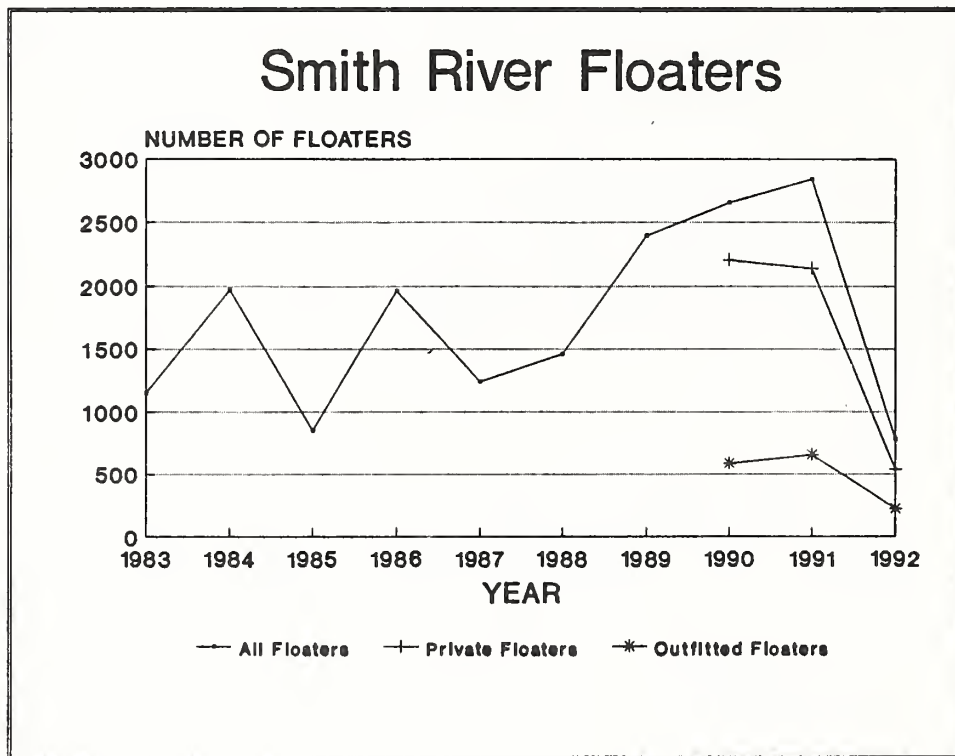
The following charts graphically depict use data on the Smith River allowing visualization of general trends of use. Please refer to pages 11 and 12 for exact 1992 figures.

Smith river flows, 1978-1992. This chart is courtesy of Ron Shields of the United States Geological Survey. It shows the 1992, record high, record low and the normal or mean flows for the Smith in cubic feet per second. Below 100 CFS, floating becomes difficult and more time is required. Flows in 1992 dropped below the record low particularly during April and May. During June and July, flows were above the record low but still below normal.

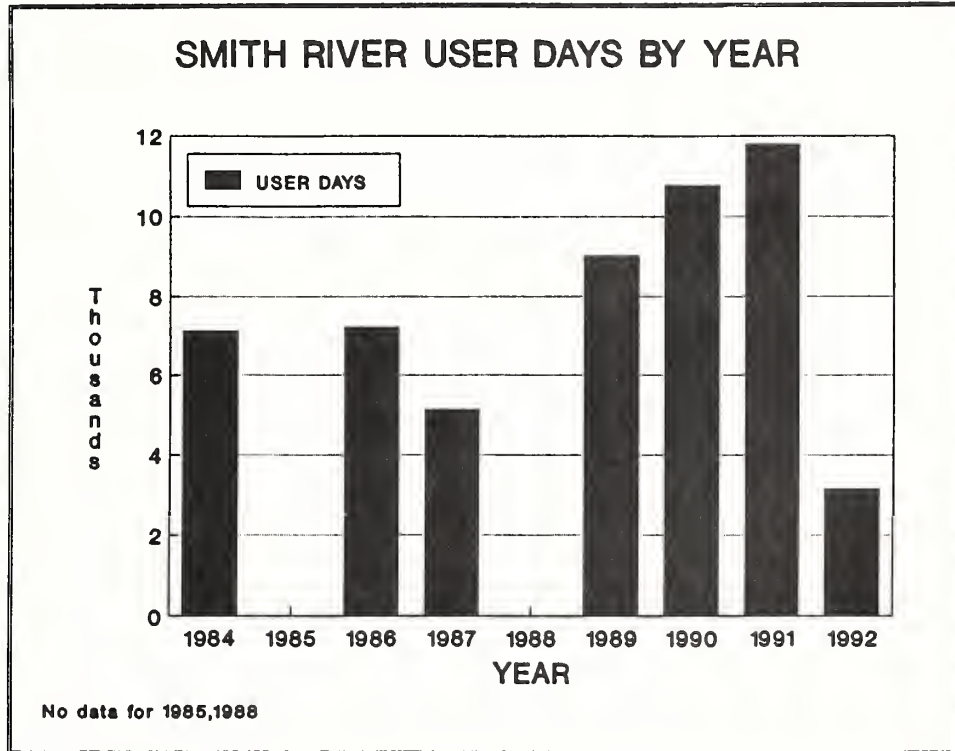
06076690 SMITH RIVER NEAR FORT LOGAN
PERIOD OF RECORD 1978-91



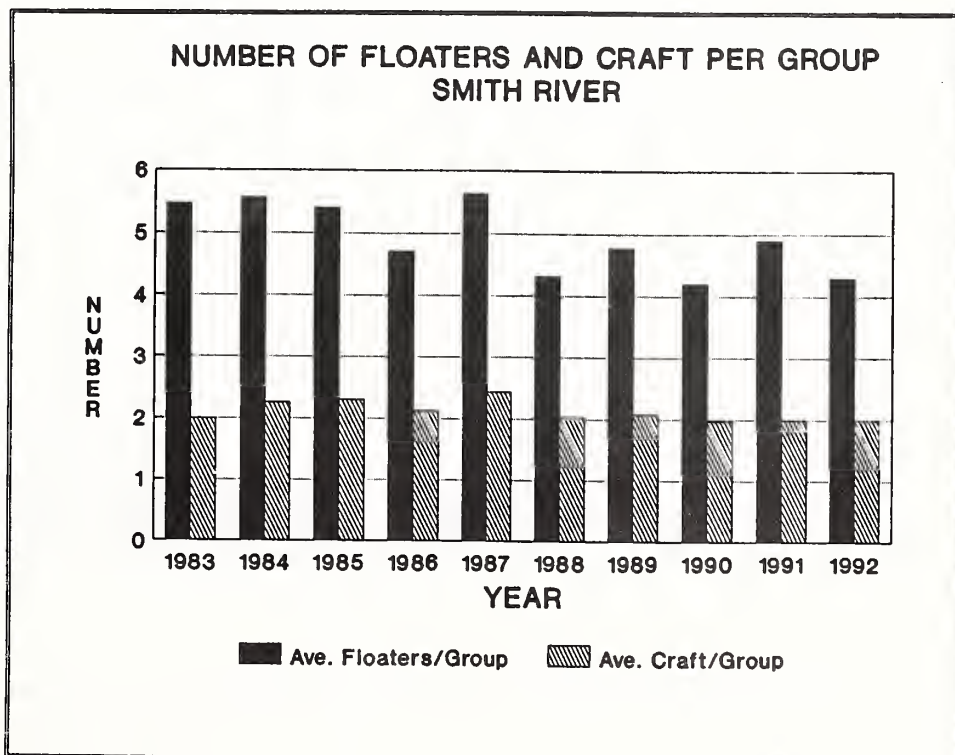
Number of floaters and number of groups from 1983 to 1992 and from 1982 to 1992, respectively. The breakdown of private and outfitted is shown for the last three years. Dips in the pattern for 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1992 can be attributed to low water years. The trend is a steady upwards climb.



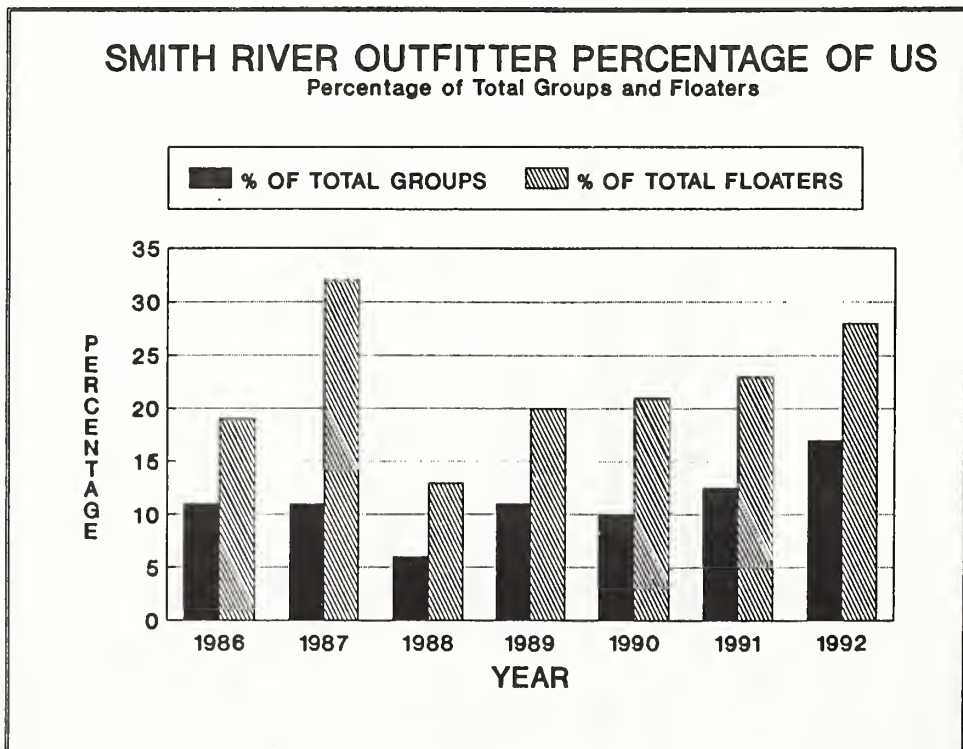
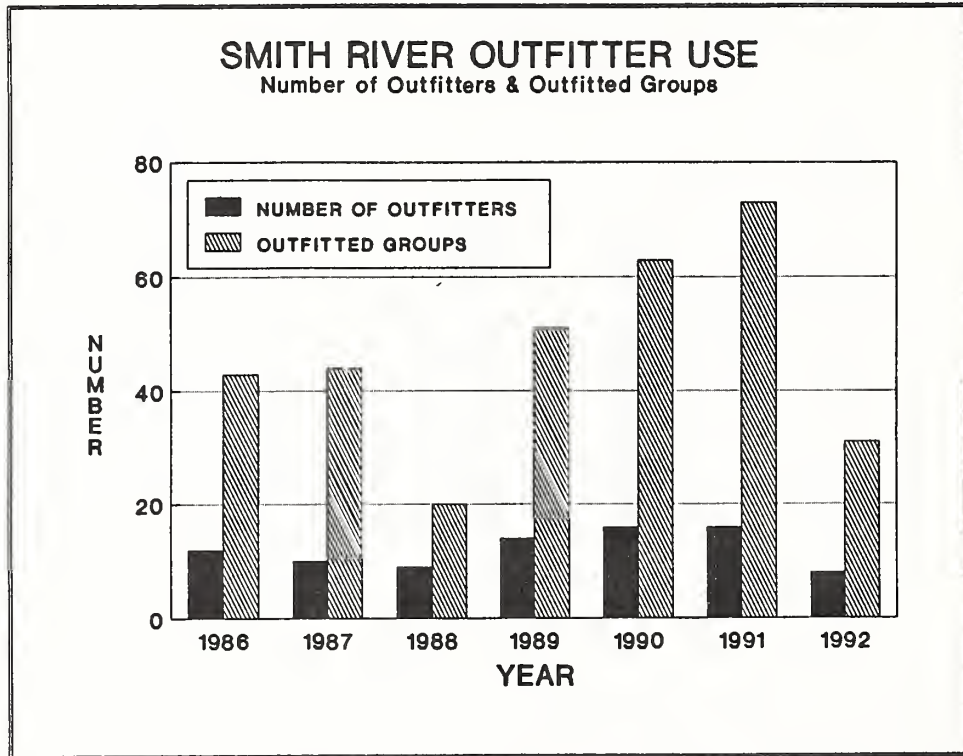
User Days from 1984 through 1992. A user day is one floater on the river for one day. A 6 person party on the river for 4 days would account for 24 user days. Again the trend is a steady increase except for low water years such as 1992.



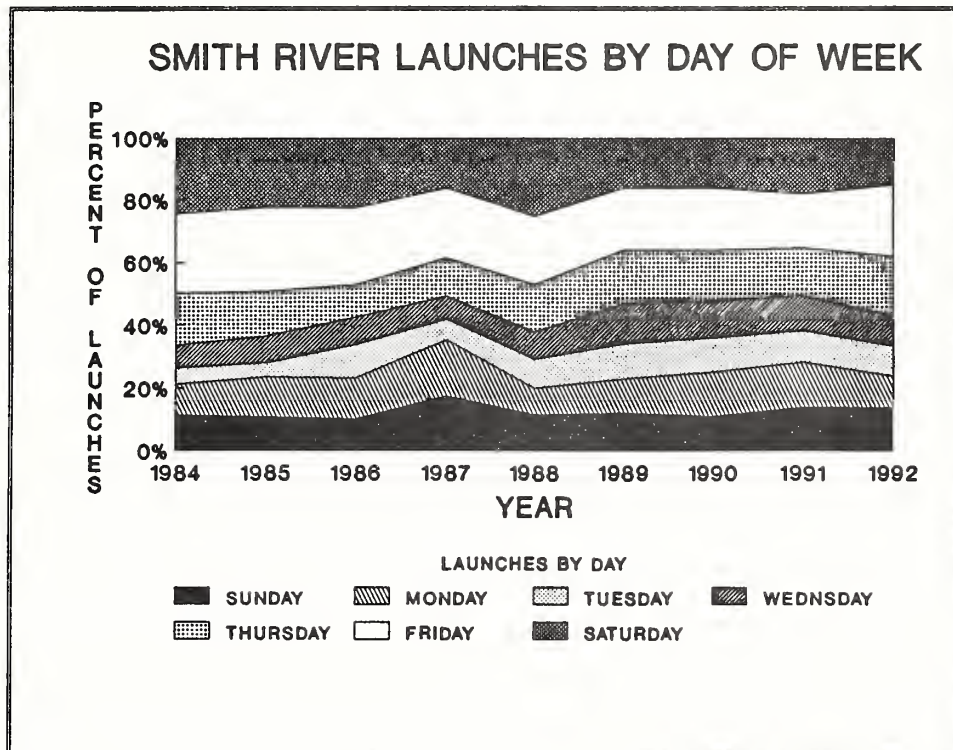
Number of floaters and craft per group from 1983 through 1992. Since 1988, overall average group size has remained between 4 and 5. Outfitted groups have been averaging twice the overall average but the greater number of private parties brings the total average down. The same holds true for number of craft. During 1992, there was a slight decrease in group size from 1991, from 4.9 to 4.3. Average number of craft per group remained the same at 2.



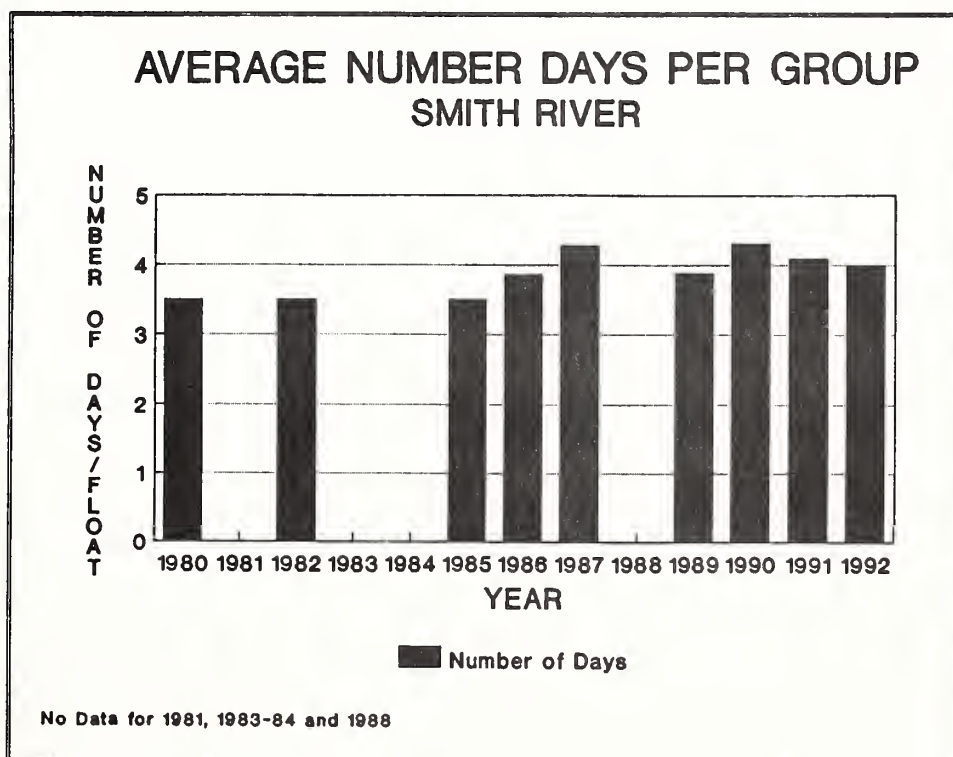
Outfitter use from 1986 to 1992. These charts depict the amount of outfitted use in two ways. The top chart shows number of outfitted groups and the number of outfitters operating on the river. The bottom chart shows what percentage of use outfitted groups and floaters make up of the total number of each. This percentage goes up in low water years as outfitters are willing to go at lower water levels.



Percentage of launches on each day of the week from 1984 to 1992. Use has spread out over the days of the week since 1984. During 1992, floaters reversed this trend somewhat by launching more on Fridays and Saturdays. This may have been in response to less floaters on the river.



Average number of days per trip 1980 through 1992. There has been a gradual trend towards longer trips until this year when the average dropped slightly from 4.1 to 4.0. days per trip. Average length of outfitted trips increased from 4.7 to 4.9 days while private trip length dropped from 4.1 to 3.6 days per trip. Data is missing for 1981, 1983-84 and 1988.



6. Appendices

Page #	21	A. 1992 Annual Rule
	27	B. 1992 Registration Form
	28	C. 1992 Boat Tag
	29	D. 1992 Floaters Log
	30	E. 1992 Floater's Log Comments
	33	F. 1992 Floater's Log Boatcamp Comments
	35	G. 1992 River Log

Appendix A. 1992 Annual Rule

1992/93 Smith River Allocation Rule
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
November 8, 1991

AS AMENDED December 13, 1991 and January 15, 1992

- 1) There are no limits on launches for private floaters.
- 2) Pre-registration to float the Smith River is mandatory for outfitters, and recommended for private floaters. Mail in pre-registration only will be accepted for this calendar year in the Great Falls office of the Department beginning March 2, 1992. Mail in pre-registration received prior to March 2, 1992 will be considered as having been received on March 2, 1992. Launch dates are awarded on a first come, first served basis. Oversubscribed launch days will be determined by a random drawing. Private floaters pay a \$25 non-refundable pre-registration fee. Outfitters must include the \$175 fee with their mail in pre-registration. These fees are applied toward total float fees.
- 3) The River Ranger will assign outfitter boat camps only. The voluntary boat camp declaration board will remain in effect for private floaters.
- 4) There is a moratorium on new outfitters on the Smith River. Outfitters who have taken paying clients down the river prior to November 8, 1991, and who were registered with either the Board of Outfitters or the U.S. Forest Service, are the only concessionaires permitted on the Smith River.
- 5) Appendix A lists 20 outfitters authorized to outfit on the Smith River and individual allocated launches for the period from May 22, 1992 through July 5, 1992 (peak season). No more than 2 outfitter launches per day are allowed in the peak season, and no more than 1 launch per day is permitted for dates outside of the peak season. Individual launch dates are scheduled on a first come, first served basis (see #2 above).
- 6) These rules are annual rules which may be amended or repealed in whole or in part by the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission.

ADOPTED this 15th day of January, 1992

ATTEST:

Secretary; Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission

Chairman; Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission

DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS
1992 SMITH RIVER ALLOCATION RULE
APPENDIX A

License #	Name	Business Name	Allocated Launches
1) 80	Richard Anderson	Great Western Fly.	1
2) 114	Mark Jones	Streamside Anglers	1
3) 130	Brian Nelson	Diamond N Outfitters	1
4) 451	Keith Baxter	Cutthroat Guide Serv.	1
5) 482	Al Wind	Mountain Services	1
6) 546	Graham Deacon	Graham Deacon Outfit.	1
7) 548	Dillon Dempsey	Castle Mountain Fly.	1
8) 636	Randy Cain	Montana Outdoor Adv.	1
9) 931	John Perry	John Perry's Flyfish.	1
10) 1449	Jerry West	Mt. River Rats	1
11) 277	Russ Kipp	Mt. High Country Tour	3
12) 574	John Maki	John Maki Outfitting	3
13) 199	Robert Butler	Robert Butler Outfit.	4
14) 472	Fred Tedesco	Western Rivers	4
15) 690	Richard Pasquale	Fly Fishers Retreat	4
16) 212	Robert D'Ambruoso	Headwaters Angling	6
17) 694	Paul Roos	Paul Roos Outfitting	7
18) 495	Mike Bay	High Plains Outfit.	8
19) 477	Joel Wiemer	Big Sky Expeditions	9
20) 573	Craig Madsen	Montana River Outfit.	21

TOTAL ALLOCATED LAUNCHES: 79

Final Smith River Allocation Rule 1993
DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS
March 13, 1992

1) OUTFITTER PERMITS

- A) Authorized outfitters will receive annual concessionaire permits. These permits will be reviewed and renewed in October of each year.
- B) The Department has the option of withdrawing or retiring a permit held by an outfitter who violates a state rule or Department regulation.

2) PERMIT TRANSFER

- A) If the concessionaire through voluntary sale or transfer of the outfitting business ceases to operate the business for which this permit is intended, this permit shall be subject to cancellation. If the permittee sells or transfers the outfitting business to another individual the department may transfer the permit and its associated launches to the new owner of the outfitting business, providing that the new concession applicant can meet criteria established by the Department and is willing and able to provide at least an equivalent floating service to the public as was previously offered by the original concessionaire. This paragraph also applies to sale or transfer of individual launches. Further providing, the Department receives a transfer fee of \$100.00 per launch for each launch transferred.
- B) No permanent transfer of permits or launches will be approved until after the 1993 allocation rules are finalized.

3) TERM OF ALLOCATION

- These rules are annual rules which may be amended or repealed in whole or in part by the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission.

ADOPTED this 13th day of March, 1992.

ATTEST:


Secretary; Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission


Chairman; Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission

STATE OF MONTANA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

1992/93/94 BIENNIAL FINAL RULE - STATE PARK SYSTEM USER FEESI. LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR RULE

Sections 23-1-105, 23-1-106, and 87-1-303 MCA authorize the collection of fees and charges for the use of state park system units and fishing access sites, and contain rule-making authority for their use, occupancy and protection. Section 23-2-408 MCA authorizes the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission to establish recreational and commercial users fees for floating and camping on the Smith River. By virtue of this authority, the department has promulgated the following rule.

Sections pertaining to Smith River - complete parks rule available from any DFWP office.

X. SMITH RIVER

A. Registration

1. There is a voluntary pre-registration system operated out of the Great Falls regional office for floaters on the Smith River. Pre-registration will become mandatory if use limits are adopted.
2. There is a year-round mandatory registration system at Camp Baker to float the Smith River. Self registration is required when river rangers are not available.

B. Boat Identification

1. Waterproof tags will be issued to each vessel when the fees are paid. Each vessel must display a tag while on the river.

C. Group Size

1. Maximum group size is 15 people (including guides and other outfitter staff). A bona fide group has shared planning and expenses for the trip, generally remains together while traveling to and on the river, and has a distinct and identifiable kitchen and camping unit.
2. Educational groups - organized tours or outings conducted for educational or scientific purposes may, on a case-by-case basis, qualify for an exemption of group size limits and fees if:
 - The group is not outfitted.
 - The educational or scientific purpose is related to the resources of the Smith River.
 - The group pre-registers at least 30 days in advance.
 - The group is from a bona fide institution established for these purposes.
 - The group applies for and receives an exemption by submitting documentation of their official recognition as an educational or scientific institution and a statement as to the purpose of their proposed visit.
 - The use for which the exemption is proposed is not primarily for recreational purposes.

D. Fees

1. Recreational user fee is \$15 per person per trip age 12 and up. There is no fee for children age 11 and under.
2. Commercial User Fee

\$15 for each client, outfitter and outfitter staff plus a \$175 fee for each trip with no annual registration fee.

3. Full fees paid May 1 - September 30. Half price fees in April and October. No fees from November to March.
4. Fees may be paid at the Great Falls Fish, Wildlife & Parks regional headquarters or at Camp Baker.
5. Bona fide landowners and immediate family usage:
 - Pay appropriate recreational user fee only if floating overnight.
 - Must register for overnight and day floats either by telephone, mail, or in person. A bona fide landowner is a person who owns land bordering the Smith River anywhere between Camp Baker and Eden Bridge.
6. The equivalent amount of outfitter fees owed and paid to the U.S. Forest Service for each season will be credited to the outfitter should the Forest Service not terminate their fee collection system on the Smith River. All balances will be cleared by the department by December 31st of each year and refunds issued if appropriate.



PERMIT NUMBER _____

LAUNCH DATE_____ LAUNCH TIME_____

GROUP LEADER _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PLEASE LIST ALL GROUP MEMBERS, REGARDLESS OF AGE.
(OUTFITTERS! - INDICATE STAFF MEMBERS BY AN "X" NEXT TO NAME.)

[illegible]

NUMBER OF EACH TYPE OF BOAT

BOAT TAG #'S

RAFTS _____
CANOES _____
DRIFT BOATS _____
KAYAKS _____
OTHER _____

OUTFITTERS TRIP? YES _____ NO _____

OUTFITTER'S NAME _____

PLEASE CIRCLE THE DAYS OF THE WEEK YOU'LL BE ON THE RIVER
SU M TU W TH F SA SU M TU W TH F SA SU M TU W TH F SA

		<u>FEEs</u>		
# FLOATERS (AGE 12 AND OLDER)	_____	X \$15.00 (MAY 1 - SEPT. 30)	=	\$ _____
		X \$7.50 (EARLY/LATE SEASON)	=	\$ _____
		\$175.00/LAUNCH OUTFITTER FEE	=	\$ _____
	ADDITIONAL MAPS _____	@ \$4.00 EACH	=	\$ _____
	OTHER _____		=	\$ _____
		TOTAL FEES PAID AT LAUNCH	=	\$ _____

Signature of Group Leader - My signature certifies that I've paid the appropriate fees per 23-1-105, 23-1-106, 87-1-303 and 23-2-401, M.C.A..

Appendix C. 1992 Boat Tag



**SMITH RIVER
MONTANA DFWP**

Appendix D. 1992 Floater's Log

SMITH RIVER FLOATER'S LOG

PLEASE HELP US TO BETTER MANAGE THE SMITH BY FILLING OUT THIS LOG DURING YOUR TRIP.

DEPOSIT YOUR COMPLETED LOG AT EDEN BRIDGE.

THANK YOU!

PLEASE COMPLETE BOTH SIDES.

Day	Name of BoatCamp (overnight Locn.)	BoatCamp Evaluation				# of People Fishing each day	Hours Fished Per Person	Rainbow Trout		Brown Trout	
		Good	Fair	Poor	Comments?			# Kept	# Released	# Kept	# Released
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											
5.											
6.											

TO BE COMPLETED AT END OF TRIP:

Did you find the Floater registration and log to be an inconvenience? ____ Yes ____ No

Did your group use the Boat Camp Declaration Board at Camp Baker? ____ Yes ____ No

If YES, did you camp at the sites you declared? ____ Yes ____ No

Was the Declaration Board helpful? ____ Yes ____ No

Did assigning Outfitter Campsites affect where you stayed? ____ Yes ____ No

Did it help you? ____ Yes ____ No

Your fees support the following management activities. Please rate the quality of each.
Put-in Facilities

Take-out Facilities

On-river Signs

Please rate each by marking with an "X"	Good	Fair	Poor	Please rate each by marking with an "X"	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of Rainbow trout caught				Number of Brown trout caught			
Size of Rainbow trout caught				Size of Brown trout caught			

Did you witness any fishing, trespass, or litter violations while on your trip? If so, what and where. Please note boat tag #'s if possible.

Other Comments

Appendix E. Floater's Log Comments
SMITH RIVER FLOATER'S LOG COMMENT SUMMARY

These comments were gleaned from the 80 floater logs that were deposited by floaters at Eden Bridge. In some cases, a long commentary was broken down into the different subjects it addressed or comments specific to other topics were moved to the summary section for that topic. Other than this and to make a comment more understandable, the original spelling, grammar and content has been left.

The floaters log asked specifically for comments on fishing, put-in facilities, take-out facilities, boat camps(in general) and on-river signs. It also requested "other comments", and these have been categorized into common themes of fees, use levels, outfitters and reports of violations and hazards and general comments.

PUT-IN FACILITIES

Overdone- simplify ! (Registration forms, etc.).
 Good-Improve erosion control by armouring launch area.
 Need better unloading for boat - banks are bad.
 Overdone- simplify (registration forms etc.)
 Good. Doug H. was very pleasant and helpful.
 Same as they were 22yrs ago.
 Top Quality.
 Excellent-really appreciate use of electric pump from the ranger.
 Good.
 Fine.
 Adequate.
 No person there.
 Adequate.
 Great.

TAKE-OUT FACILITIES

Great
 O.K.
 Please put garbage and recycling receptacles.
 Great.
 Same but better parking.
 Top Quality.
 Maybe the Eden Bridge sign should be up on the fence line.
 Just great. Really appreciated the volunteer working at the take out.
 Empty the dumpster - it was overflowing.
 Adequate.
 Okay.
 Adequate.
 Fine.

ON-RIVER SIGNS

Great
 Very good, pleased to see it well marked.
 Adequate.
 Just right , don't need anymore.

Great.

All of these(put-in, take-out, and on-river signs.) are adequate and were adequate before you started charging to float the Smith River. The only thing we could see where our money was being spent on was a \$15-20,000 cabin at the beginning for the two new river rangers to stay in and collect the fees.

End of boat camp sign at Givens may not be necessary due to cliff. Don't think you need them.

Very good-I'd like to see a few more- like trail to such and such and also how many campsites per boat camp.

Great. Very helpful.

Good.

Fine.

Obvious.

Helpful - could use even more.

Excellent.

Great.

No more signs!

We would like to see more I.D. on the larger private ownerships to orient on the map as to where on the river we are.

REPORTS OF VIOLATIONS AND HAZARDS

None

Yes- bait fisherman at cabins on second day .

No and people were very helpful when we "crashed" in the rapids.

No.

No - very minor litter.

No.

Pinheads killing trout! Not floaters - campers near Trout Creek. Just downstream from Camp Baker there was a 1" ribbon of orange plastic tape stretched across the river. It sagged into the water and was bouncing in and out of the water .Our canoe came upon it so fast we couldn't lift it clear it caught under a lip on the front of our canoe, stopped us dead in the water (stretched to the snapping point), held firm while we spun sideways and nearly dumped over. Somehow we got turned around and pulled it over our heads.

RIVER RANGER/STAFF

Excellent ranger and staff. Great Job!

OUTFITTERS

The outfitters seem to have a preference on all the choice campsites on the river . This is bullshit and will certainly lead to confrontations.

I would like more information about outfitter reservations. I think its excessive(the number of camps they have reserved) I also think out of staters should pay at least \$50.- each.

I DETEST having camp spots reserved for outfitters! That is wrong. It should be first come first there.

Been floating the Smith for the last 12yrs.- don't appreciate all our favorite campsites being designated as "Outfitter"gets first chance sites.

I don't think they(outfitters) should get all the good sites - makes it impossible to plan.

Campsite reserved for outfitter is B.S.

BOATCAMP - GENERAL

A garbage receptacle would be convenient and reduce the likelihood of accidental dumping.

Out house facilities were good. People shouldn't be allowed to have fire rings-we put one out at Fraunhofer on May 18 on our lunch stop.

A log for sitting was burned and the fire pits were all messed up.

FISHING

Great trip -hope the fishing can survive.

Hooked and released brown trout in the 3-4 lb. range on the last day.

Don't take a jonboat! Excellent trout stream. We caught Browns up to 21".

Too many whitefish in upper river?

FEES

\$4.- for second map which cost \$.15 to print seemed expensive.

USE LEVELS

Very few people floated due to low H2O level.

We were only party on the river.

Great trip- especially due to lack of crowds . I believe we need to limit # allowed on river in a normal yr.

What is the big deal about regulation of floaters - the river could have used lots more while I was on it.

GENERAL COMMENTS

It was a great trip!

Enjoyed it very much.

Mothers Spring pipe plugged up.

We wish our money could be spent on a shovel and pick and some pipe for the river rangers to use to develop some springs and water sources along the way as they probably float the river every week(Mothers spring pipe is plugged up with no water flowing out)This can be done with some shovel and pick work in several areas along the way. we suggested this in yrs. past also. Thank you.

Very nice float .

Less wind or from opposite direction please.

We saw two racoons,several beaver,a black bear at Sheep Wagon, a rock chuck, a deer and lots and lots of birds and ducks.

One day affair did not fish- paddled hard ,11 1/2 hrs. total.

Sorry I lost my papers but it was a great trip

Good job of managing river and floaters. Hope to return.

Great trip, will do it again surely.

We had a great time.

Appendix F. 1992 Floater's Log Boatcamp Comments

INDIVIDUAL BOAT CAMP COMMENTSIN LIEU

Small not much room,nice latrine.

INDIAN SPRINGS

Great-well kept.

Outstanding.

MOUTH OF ROCK CREEK

Beautiful cliffs.

SCOTTY ALLEN'S BLACK CANYON

Very clean.

Very clean- saw black bear above Scotty Allens.

Too small for # of floaters.

Very good.

TWO CREEKS

Could use some money to cover the latrines.

Great well kept.

SHEEP WAGON

Great hike to vantage point East of camp.

Extremely clean and nicely laid out -thoroughly enjoyed our trip.

Outfitter post is gone!

SUNSET CLIFF

Scarce wood.

Outstanding.

Outfitters filled all the prime camping spots.

Nice.

COUNTY LINE

Hornets nest in latrine.

TROUT CREEK

Great well kept.

Very clean and neat.

Very nice clean camp.

TABLE ROCK

Slippery path up bank.

Saw bear and otter beavers and deer.

FRAUNHOFER

Scarce wood.

Had to stay here even tho we signed up for Table Rock cuz 2 canoes took our camp at Table rock.

UPPER PARKER FLAT

No wood available.

Nice pools.

PARKER FLAT

Extremely clean and nicely laid out. Thoroughly enjoyed our trip.
Latrine at 45 degree angle.

STAIGMILLER

could use some brush cleared.

MERGANSER BEND

could use some brush cleared.

BLACK BUTTE

Great well kept.

RIDGETOP

Lots of manure around camp.
Excellent!
Bees in latrine.

GIVENS GULCH

Map is misleading-should show camp between rapids. This camp has
not been used much.
Givens camp may be fire hazard.

RATTLESNAKE BEND

Scarce wood
Outstanding.

DAILY LUNCHEES

MONTHLY SUMMARY

[illegible]

		IN RIVER CORRIDOR		TOTAL		DAILY LAUNCHES		PRIVATE		ADMINISTRATIVE		PRE-REGISTRATION			FLOW IN CFS
DATE	DAY OF WEEK	# OF GROUPS	# OF FLOATERS	# OF GROUPS	# OF FLOATERS	# OF GROUPS	# OF FLOATERS	# OF GROUPS	# OF FLOATERS	# OF GROUPS	# OF FLOATERS	# OF PRE-REG	# OF WENT	# OF GROUPS NO PRE-R	
JUNE TOTAL				55	237	13	100	39	132	3	5	0	0	0	
JUNE 1	M	3	16	1	2			1	2						99
2	TU	2	14	0	0										89
3	W	1	8	0	0										82
4	TH	4	21	3	13			3	13						66
5	F	3	13	0	0										58
6	SA	4	17	0	0										59
7	SU	3	9	1	4			1	4						59
8	M	3	16	1	9	1	9								57
9	TU	2	12	0	0										52
10	W	3	15	1	3			1	3						49
11	TH	2	12	0	0										44
12	F	4	15	2	3			1	2	1	1				41
13	SA	6	20	2	5			2	5						53
14	SU	6	42	1	11	1	11								57
15	M	6	27	1	8	1	8								64
16	TU	7	35	2	10	2	10								108
17	W	10	57	4	25	1	12	3	13						264
18	TH	12	56	3	10	1	4	2	6						270
19	F	15	62	5	10			4	8	1	2				190
20	SA	15	63	2	11	1	8	1	3						151
21	SU	20	90	7	40	2	22	5	18						123
22	M	15	74	1	2			1	2						105
23	TU	15	66	3	12			3	12						94
24	W	15	68	2	6	1	4	1	2						88
25	TH	15	56	2	5			1	3	1	2				78
26	F	14	56	2	5			2	5						75
27	SA	11	29	2	4			2	4						74
28	SU	10	34	3	17	1	4	2	13						83
29	M	8	36	2	14	1	8	1	6						85
30	TU	9	36	2	8			2	8						97

[illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

